

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06
SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01
DODE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 /104 W
-----040745Z 016962 /20

R 040611Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9911

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL PERTH

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION OECD PARIS

UNCLAS CANBERRA 1519

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: EGEN, EFIN, EALR, ELAB, AS

SUBJ: AUSTRALIA - UNEMPLOYMENT IN FEBRUARY

REF: A. CANBERRA 0844, B. CANBERRA 1194

1. DATA RELEASED MARCH 4 SHOW TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT AT END OF
FEBRUARY 34,668 REPRESENTING 5.7 PERCENT OF ESTIMATED
LABOR FORCE. THIS IS DECREASE OF 7,921 FROM UNEMPLOYMENT TOTAL
AT END OF JANUARY WHEN PERCENTAGE OF ESTIMATED LABOR FORCE
WAS 5.83.

2. WHILE MARGINAL DOWNTREND IS ENCOURAGING, FEBRUARY TOTAL
STILL REPRESENTS SECOND HIGHEST MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL
IN POSTWAR PERIOD.

3. THESE DATA ARE BEING RELEASED IN MIDDLE OF CURRENT
CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION COMMISSION INDEXATION HEARINGS
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ON QUESTION OF ADJUSTING WAGE RATES IN LIGHT OF DECEMBER
QUARTER 6 PERCENT CPI INCREASE (CANBERRA 1194), AND WILL
BE USED TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT CASE FOR LIMITING ADJUSTMENT
TO SMALL PORTION OF CPI INCREASE IN INTEREST OF FURTHER PROGRESS
AGAINST INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

4. COMMENT: WHILE ABSOLUTE ACCURACY OF MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT

STATISTICS HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY QUESTIONED AS A RESULT OF
INDEPENDENT SURVEYS SHOWING WIDE DISCREPANCIES, THE FEBRUARY
FIGURE WHICH SUGGESTS AT LEAST A LEVELING OFF ON RELATIVE
BASIS WILL BE ENCOURAGING TO PROPONENTS OF CABINET'S CURRENT
POLICY PRIORITIES. BUT GIVEN MARGINAL NATURE OF REDUCTION
AND UNRELIABILITY OF MONTH TO MONTH VARIATIONS, LATEST
FIGURES CANNOT BE VIEWED AS STRONG EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT
DOWNTREND.
HARGROVE

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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